

----- ST REPORT INTERNATIONAL ONLINE MAGAZINE -----

"The Original 16/32bit Online Magazine"
from
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> 07/19/91: STReport #7.29 The Original 16/32 bit Online Magazine!

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> The Editor's Podium

This weekend is the Brace Show, Blue Ridge Atari Fest 1991. It promises to be one of the better one affairs scheduled for this summer. There will be a complete show report in next week's issue.

Atari is making the comeback hoped for by so many. Slowly but its a definite comeback. Now if the internal unrest in the entire userbase came be alleviated to a more acceptable level. Oh, to be sure that will happen its just neat to think that it will happen fast.

Off to the Blue Ridge Fest!

Ralph.....

TODAY'S NEWS . . . TODAY!

Publisher - Editor

Ralph F. Mariano

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AMIGA DIVISION

MAC DIVISION

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

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via E-Mail to:

Compuserve.....	70007,4454
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> CPU STATUS REPORT
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LATE BREAKING INDUSTRY-WIDE NEWS

Issue #29

Compiled by: Lloyd E. Pulley, Sr.

--Toronto, Ontario, Canada

COMMODORE MAKES 386SX NOTEBOOK

Commodore has added the C386SX-LT, a 386SX notebook computer, to its Canadian line. The C386SX-LT uses the Intel 386SX processor, weighs about seven pounds and comes with a liquid-crystal display supporting the VGA display standard. The machine also has an 82-key keyboard, one megabyte of main memory, a 40-megabyte hard disk drive, a 1.44-megabyte

3.5-inch diskette drive, parallel and serial ports, and a slot for adding an optional 2,400-bit-per-second modem. Memory can be expanded to five megabytes.

Commodore said the machine will run for two hours of continuous use on its nickel-cadmium main battery, and can be recharged in an hour. Power management features can extend the battery life, the company said.

The suggested retail price for the C386SX-LT is C\$4,599 and it is available now. Commodore said the unit has also been introduced in Europe, but there are no current plans to sell it in the United States.

--Scotts Valley, California

SEAGATE TO LAY OFF

As part of a massive restructuring of parts of the company, Seagate has announced an 18% layoff, about 1200 employees, from its US and European operations. According to Seagate, the layoffs will be among "indirect" workforce -- people in human resources, sales, and other white-collar jobs, not in manufacturing.

"Seagate is still seeing very good demand for its product but with a severe price erosion, profits are down, and current revenues and profits do not support the level of staffing that we currently have," said spokeswoman Julie Still. "Therefore we will put in place a number of cost reduction efforts including cutting advertising, travel expenses, and consolidating employees in locations" to reduce overhead.

As part of the layoff, the company ordered that no log-ins be allowed on the company's corporate computer system until after the announcement, for security reasons, according to one source. Guards were ordered not to escort any employees to their cars.

--Boise, Idaho

MICRON TECH ANNOUNCES 4,8 MB DRAM
CARDS FOR LAPTOPS

Micron Technology is selling to computer manufacturers new 88-pin, 4 and 8 megabyte IC DRAM cards that allow external memory upgrades for portable computers and can be used in 16, 18, 32 and 36-bit systems.

The company says it developed the cards to allow installation of memory upgrades without opening, and possibly damaging, the system unit. The card uses low power DRAMs surface-mounted on both sides of an ultra thin printed circuit board about the width and length of a credit card and 3.3 mm thick.

The cards also include buffered input to ensure compatibility across platforms; individual memory bank selection for lower power consumption; parity to correct data errors; and stainless steel panels to provide better protection and heat dispersal than plastic does.

--Tokyo, Japan

FUJITSU BEGINS WORK ON SUPER-PARALLEL
PROCESSOR

Fujitsu opened a special research center in Tokyo and announced plans to become a major developer of large scale parallel processor machines.

Fujitsu already has an experimental parallel processor available. The chip has a capability of one million million (trillion) FLOPS (floating point operations per second). Called the AP 1000, the processor is a reduced instruction set computing (RISC) design.

The firm's eventual goal is to create what it calls a super parallel computer which is equipped with a million units of microprocessors.

--Houston, Texas

COMPAQ MOVES UP TO #377 IN GLOBAL
FORTUNE 500

Compaq Computer Corporation has announced that it has moved up to number 377 in Fortune Magazine's Global 500 list. Compaq held the 438th spot on last year's global list, jumping up 61 spots this year. Compaq claims that it ranks number 125 on the Global 500 list in terms of profits, up from number 182.

--Singapore

WESTERN DIGITAL ROBOTS MANUFACTURE
DISK DRIVES

Western Digital has opened a new 250,000 square foot assembly plant in Singapore for manufacturing disk drives. What makes the plant unusual is that it uses robotics to automate the entire assembly and test process without a single manual station.

Lynda Orban of Western Digital said that the new plant can produce 5,000 drives a day -- a new drive every 15 seconds -- with improved quality and at a lower cost. "This not only will improve our quality control by having a cleaner environment for the manufacturing process, and reduce the number of parts made inoperable by human error, but it will force our suppliers to increase their quality standards. You see, a robot will not fiddle with a screw to make it fit, like a person might. If the part is not up to specifications, a robot can automatically tell and it just rejects it," she said.

--Columbus, Ohio

NEW PERSONAL COMPUTER INSURANCE FROM
SAFEWARE

Insurance company Safeware has introduced a new form of insurance that combines a service contract with basic insurance for personal computers. The package is called Fix:It. Dave Johnson, Safeware CEO, said "mechanical breakdown of a PC can be just as significant" which is why "we're cutting through high-priced service contracts and combining insurance and service" in one policy. The policy covers "all insurance coverage, including lightening damage, fire, and theft."

According to the company, the policy also covers full power surge insurance, covers all software used at no extra cost, and offers many repair facility options. Interestingly, the cost of coverage is sharply reduced if a surge protector is used with the personal computer. "The rate varies depending on the deductible," said Johnson, "and whether a

surge protector is present."

Because new machines usually come with some sort of service warranty, the company also has a plan whereby the customer stipulates the date when the manufacturers warranty runs out, and the policy automatically includes the service contract in with the basic insurance from that date.

For more information call Safeware toll-free on: 1-800-848-3469.

--Santa Clara, California

NEW BENCHMARKS ALLIANCE FORMED

Benchmarks are nothing new in the computer industry, but, to date, none have been published that take account of real life workload situations. That's where the Business Applications Performance Corporation (BAPC) comes into the picture.

Formed on May 9 of this year, the BAPC has just announced the signing of Dell, IBM, Intel, and NCR to its ranks alongside existing members which include Hewlett-Packard, Microsoft, and Novell.

> CPU PC STATUS REPORT
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LATE BREAKING INDUSTRY-WIDE NEWS

Issue #3

Compiled by: Lloyd E. Pulley, Sr.

--Purchase, New York

IBM PURCHASES METAPHOR COMPUTER
SYSTEMS

In a move directly related to IBM's and Apple's recent decision to collaborate on object-oriented programming, IBM and Metaphor Computer Systems have agreed to merge, resulting in Metaphor being a wholly owned subsidiary of IBM.

IBM already owned an interest in Metaphor. In September 1990, the companies established Patriot Partners, a joint venture to develop object-oriented application system software technology, designed to work with multiple operating systems and networks.

The new IBM subsidiary will focus on integrating Metaphor's Data Interpretation Systems (DIS) capabilities with complementary IBM capabilities. DIS combines a graphical user interface with relational database technology, allowing non-technical business professionals to access multiple databases and to construct their own applications."

--Provo, Utah

NOVELL AND DIGITAL RESEARCH TO MERGE

Digital Research has agreed to become a wholly-owned subsidiary of Novell, Inc. Both companies boards of directors have approved the deal, but still requires approval of Digital Research stockholders. The company says no difficulties are expected in obtaining that approval. The merger is expected to be completed by October of this year.

Digital Research, headquartered in Monterey, California, originated such industry standards as the CP/M operating system, DR DOS and Concurrent DOS. Novell, Inc markets network operating systems, and is the largest outside investor in Unix System Laboratories, the developer of Unix System V Release 4.

--Los Angles, California

BORLAND/ASHTON-TATE MERGER:

DBASE WINDOWS?

In an announcement that rocked the database world and the software industry in general, Borland announced it plans to buy Ashton-Tate (AT). The boards of directors of both companies approved the purchase, and now it hinges on approval of the shareholders and receipt of the required government approvals.

The move was a totally unexpected as the companies seemed totally unrelated for four reasons...

The first is Borland has been thought of as a company that develops software for programmers, with its successful releases of its C compilers and its development of Object Windows.

The second was the fact that Borland's database product Paradox is in a market by itself since it is incompatible with dBASE language products.

Third was Borland's announcement to develop its own dBASE compiler for Windows and compatible with Paradox it calls Turbo Xbase (Infoworld, p.1, May 6, 1991).

Fourth was AT's announcement over two years ago at the dBASE developers conference that it would release the dBASE Professional Compiler. Tim Lebel, product manager on the Professional Compiler for AT, was reported as saying in June that the product was not expected to be even in beta test stages for 4 to 6 months.

Regarding whether Borland will combined its database product Paradox with dBASE language products, Miriam Liskin, an xBASE consultant and writer, commented, "My guess is they will keep supporting both Paradox and dBASE IV which are each great programs, and move to distinguish them over time. For end users it'll be a matter of which interface style they like.

--Mountain View, California

ADOBE ACCUSES U-LEAD OF COPYRIGHT

INFRINGEMENT

A lawsuit filed by Adobe Systems against U-Lead Systems charges unfair competition and copyright infringement, violations of Lanham Act and the California Satuatory and Common Law for unfair trade practices. Adobe seeks unspecified damages for, among other things, promoting and offering for review in trade publications, versions of Adobe's Photo-Styler software and documentation which were materially different from the version sold to the public.

--Tokyo, Japan

LCD DEMAND SKYROCKETS:
ROHM TRIPLES PRODUCTION

Kyoto-based hardware maker Rohm says it will triple the production of its supertwist liquid crystal displays due to their increasing popularity for laptop computers, notebook-type computers and portable word processors.

Rohm's LCD RCV6003 is based on what's called supertwist nematic (STN) technology. Due to the thin panel and the backlit tube, it is only 5.8-mm thick, and it weighs only 390g. The LCD has a resolution of 640 x 400 pixels.

--Washington, D.C.

SPA RELEASES TOP SELLING GAMES LIST

SPA, the Software Publishers Association, has released the results of MS-DOS game software sales figures from Babagges, CompUSA, Electronics Boutique, and Waldensoftware for the month of May. King's Quest V has moved up one spot from number two to first place, but the big mover is Velocity's Jetfighter II; not in the top 25 last month, Jetfighter II has already jumped to number 2 position this month.

-- New for the PC

Procalc 3D Spreadsheet

Parsons Technology has announced the release of ProCalc 3D, a three dimensional spreadsheet package for IBM PCs and close compatibles.

Procalc 3D offers the usual features of most spreadsheets, but also allows the stacking of multiple pages of data, forming a 'work cube.' While displaying information in the traditional two-dimensional format, data is automatically calculated in three dimensions as data is changed. To work with a cross section of data in depth, users issue a single command to rotate the work cube.

ProCalc 3D has a suggested price of \$89. The package requires at least 512 kilobytes of RAM, but the company strongly recommends 640K. A hard disk is also required.

-- New for the PC

Pacific Micro's Mac-In-DOS

Pacific Micro has released a new version of Mac-In-DOS, its data transfer software program between the Macintosh and IBM and compatible PCs.

The new software runs under Microsoft Windows 3.0, and, according to the company, has the capability to format Macintosh disks in an IBM or compatible disk drive. Text, binary, and graphics files can be exchanged between the two formats.

The software lists two directories side-by-side on the screen. One list contains all the Macintosh files on a Mac diskette in the disk drive, and the other contains all the files from a selected DOS directory. Files can be copied from one side to the other, with conversion taking

place immediately, according to the company.

Mac-In-DOS is priced at \$199 and comes on a single DOS 1.44 megabyte, 3.5-inch floppy disk, which is simply loaded into the DOS computer. No additional hardware or software is required for either the DOS or Mac machines.

-- New for the PC

Carmen Sandiego Takes A Trip Into
America's Past

Riding the crest of a popularity wave for its Carmen Sandiego series of games, Broderbund Software has now released "Where in America's Past is Carmen Sandiego?"

The game is the fifth in the series of best-selling adventure/educational games and requires players to track the criminal Carmen Sandiego and her gang through 400 years of American history.

The company claims that the new software offers more than the previous games as it includes scanned VGA location graphics of American art.

The game also comes with a 1,300-page encyclopedia of American history and culture, called "What Happened When."

The game comes with VGA/MCGA, EGA, CGA, Tandy and Hercules graphic support. Sound Blaster, AdLib, Roland MT-32, Tandy 3-Voice, and Tandy digital sound support is also offered.

"Where in America's Past is Carmen Sandiego?" retails for \$59.95 and is available now.

-- New for the PC

Worksheet Optimizer for Quattro Pro

Brubaker Software has begun shipping a version of Worksheet Optimizer for Borland International's Quattro Pro spreadsheet software. Worksheet Optimizer compresses spreadsheet data files.

Dale Brubaker, president of Brubaker Software, explained that the software looks for inefficiencies in worksheet construction. For instance, cells that have been formatted but contain no data waste storage space, as do those containing "null strings" -- a label prefix and nothing else. Worksheet Optimizer can reduce the disk space a typical worksheet uses by 10 to 12 percent, Brubaker said.

The software also speeds worksheet recalculation by methods such as eliminating repetitive calculations. Rather than have the same calculation performed in 100 different cells, an optimized worksheet will do it once in a separate cell and then refer to the result.

The suggested retail price for Worksheet Optimizer is US\$99.95. Versions for Lotus Development's 1-2-3 and Symphony are also available.

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A LITTLE OF THIS, A LITTLE OF THAT

by Michael Lee

Page Stream 2.1 has finally been released. Naturally with any program (upgrade) that has this many new features and so much additional power, there's going to be some confusion and questions. Maybe the following posts will help answer some of your questions.

Some miscellaneous replies and comments from Mike Loader (Soft Logik) about the new version of Page Stream 2.1 - From CIS...

There have been some comments that PageStream 2.1 is slower than version 1.8 in screen re-draws and in printing time...

2.1 is NOT slower than 1.8. Screen fonts display at the same speed. Outline fonts display slower, true, that's why bitmaps are used under 22 pixels in high resolution.

Creation times are identical to 1.8. If you experience longer creation times it is due to lack of memory. The less memory available, the longer it takes to print. Think of it this way. PageStream tries to print the page in one pass. If there isn't enough memory to do this, it creates it in pieces. It creates as much as possible, sends it, then creates the next part.

Let's say in 1.8 you had room to create a page in one or two passes. That would be pretty fast. But if in 2.1 you have limited memory (due to a larger program, and outline fonts in use), then PageStream will have to take more passes at it...it might take 5 or 6 or even more passes. Each time it does a pass it has to create all the information above that pass before it can create the information in that pass. Speed is therefore not only a function of processor speed, but memory availability.

Screen display: outlines are slow on screen on ST computers because of the speed of the processor. But it can be faster if you have more memory (more than 2.5 megs). A four meg system is best, because it provides memory for font caching. When PageStream requires a Compu-graphic font, it asks the CG routines for a bitmap at a certain size. If there isn't enough memory it will only display the bitmap. If there's enough memory it will cache it for later use. Next time it needs the bitmap it will look in the RAM cache first. But if you're using a low memory system (under 2.5 megs), you will not get font caching. Font caching makes PageStream MUCH faster. 2.5 MB might not be enough to invoke font caching depending on the document size and other utilities running.

PostScript and PageStream outline fonts are not cached. Only CG fonts are cached. PostScript fonts are slow the first time they are accessed because the font outline data must be decrypted. (ie: when the first character is typed.) Then they act at normal speeds. CG fonts print faster to non-PS printers than other types of fonts.

...Once again, 2.1 is NO slower than 1.8 if you have adequate memory. Yes, PageStream 2.1 uses more memory than 1.0, but as software has evolved, so has hardware. The average user no longer has a 520ST with 512K and a single sided drive.

Comments about the FONTEQIV.V2 file...

The Fontequiv file can slow down PgS because of the way fonts are sorted. The Fontequiv file essentially makes one font equivalent to another. For example, it makes CS Times equivalent to PostScript Times equivalent to Tyme. The file can be edited to remove fonts you don't use. This is not documented at this time but a help file will be made available in the future.

...The CG fonts will not work without the fontequiv, fontss and plugin files. They must be added via the font manager. I believe this is the default setup. The manual shows an early screenshot with fonts installed in a PSFONTS folder. The standard is now the FONTS folder.

Miscellaneous comments...

Lowercase counters below baseline: professional fonts normally descend below the baseline because it increases readability. The fonts shipped with 1.8 were not as good as the new CG fonts.

....PageStream 2.1...is a high quality desktop publisher which requires sufficient hardware to be used. PageStream can no longer run in 512K from a single sided floppy without having the feature list of Publishing Partner. PageStream is the most advanced desktop publisher for Atari computers. Soft-Logik never advertised PageStream 2.1 as faster. We did advertise it as better and it is better.

...PageStream has always imported more types of graphics than any other Atari desktop publisher. The selection has always been respectable, but the selection is even better now. PageStream does not limit you to only GEM and IMG, but offers almost every major Atari, Amiga, PC and Mac standard.

...the PostScript driver is now more efficient. It is also much more stable. BTW, the Lino driver is not used in 2.1. The PostScript driver is used for everything.

For those who have not yet received their upgrades, there are still quite a few upgrades to be processed. Shipping is working as fast as they can to send them out.

Comments and replies from the Soft Logik RoundTable on Genie....

About the different types of CompuGraphic fonts, why some work, why some don't and what to do about it - From J.Pierstorff...

...Make sure that the Type 1 fonts are in IBM Type 1 format and not Macintosh. They are different, and only The IBM's work with Page STream 2.1. There is a conversion program [MACTOIBM] that lets you convert Mac Type 1's to IBM Type 1's. It works well and is from MegaType.

PageSTream reads the files to see what they are and it ignores the AFM PFB extensions.

Why some fonts seem to be drawn faster than others - From Nevin Shalit..
...if you have bitmaps for your fonts the Type 1's should not be slow at sizes below 24 point. When the program draws vector fonts things do slow down a bit. Using a Type 1 font for body text and not having a bitmap ...well that would drive me nuts. Not having bitmaps for a font you use in headlines is fine...

More from Mike Angier...

...the reason why some PS fonts sprint along while others seem to crawl is simply complexity. A font like ITC Machine which is made up of just a few straight line segments should be one of the fastest since calculating and filling straight lines is as simple as things can get, but a font like Commercial Script which is made up of only bezier curves should be much slower since the calculations are much more involved to fill a cubic bezier curve.

More on this from J.Pierstorff...

...also realize that many public domain Type 1's were scanned and autotraced by programs like Fontographer (Macintosh). Autotracing "works" but usually produces a font with thousands of points more than are needed. This greatly increases screen re-draw time and print-out calculations!

Until next week.....

> WILLY WEASELY! STR Feature
=====

The "Whoopadoo Club", Willy's fan club!

WILLY WEASELY FANS - REJOICE!

=====

An Update

by Dana P. Jacobson

Last week I noted that the initial printing of the hardcopy version of Willy Weasely comic book was imminent. Well, no sooner than I reported that than the very next day I had "Willy Weasely's Weasel Tales" in my hands!

I saw Rick Keene at the Atari Day at one of our local dealers, the Bit Bucket, and Rick brought with him all of the ingredients pertaining to the "Whoopadoo Club", Willy's fan club. Included with membership is a great-looking membership card, a Willy Weasely button, and a 20-page Willy Weasely comic book (the first of what I hope to a long series of comics). I was amazed to see that the comic included in its pages a two-page centerfold of Willy's on-again/off-again girlfriend Bunny! I heard stories that the Audobon Society is up in arms over this obvious exploitation of feminine charm!! Weasel lovers everywhere are standing up for their rights, however, and Bunny's picture stays!

Rick's popular Talespin comics featuring Willy are continuing to be a favorite on the online services and local bulletin boards. If you haven't seen them yet, for shame! Look for ALLSFAIR, WILLY, and WILLY_3 on your favorite system - you will not regret it.

While STReport is the online magazine "headquarters" representative, you may want to learn more immediately. If so, you can contact Rick on GENie (R.KEENE2), or write him directly:

Rick Keene
P.O. Box 463
Natick, MA 01760

You can also join the Whoopadoo Club by enclosing a letter with \$6.00 to Rick at the above address. This will also keep you notified of upcoming information. So, what are you waiting for? Be the first on your block to become a member!!

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In August, we will be bringing you a very special RTC in room 5 of our conference rooms. A surprise guest will be hosting this conference. Look for the announcements closer to the time.

We will be attending the Ashville, North Carolina Atari Fest tomorrow. July 20, 1991. We are looking forward to seeing all of you there. Be sure to check this one out. It is a must to attend.

We are in the process of firming up some very exciting formal conferences. Look for announcements of them in our banners. Perhaps even a free conference is slated. Watch those banners, folks.

Our libraries continue to be very active with a tremendous amount of files uploaded continuously. We want to take a few moments to thank everyone that is freely sharing by spending the time to upload. We appreciate it more than you know.

One of our more active uploaders is S.YELVINGTO2 who has uploaded everything from an auto traffic game (file#20016 TRAFFIC.LZH), mouse control D.A.(file#20015 N_MOUSE.LZH) to a desk accessory to format MS-DOS disks (file#20013 N_FORMAT.LZH).

Interested in graphics? Be sure to check out the latest D.BORDONARO2 files that were uploaded. (file# 20065 to #20069) You will find everything from a bow shooting an arrow at a target, to a Sopwith camel making a flyby.

Keep them coming.....till next time.

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> One Man's Opinion STR Spotlight "kill the messenger" Is this right?
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CUTTING THROUGH THE FLAK
=====

By Dana P. Jacobson

These last couple of weeks have been hot in New England. A vacation is a time to relax, and that's just what I have been doing. But, I hate the kind of heat that's been around here lately. By "here", not only do I mean the hot and humid weather of New England this time of year; but I'm also referring to the heat that's erupting in the STReport arena, especially within these pages and the online services.

What heat, you may be asking? Well, if you have to ask, you're either not a regular reader of STReport or you don't subscribe to the pay online services!

Why is it that people are insistent in trying to "kill the messenger" all of the time? All that I have been reading lately is that STReport is the harbinger of bad news, rumors, innuendo, and the like. That STReport is anti-Atari and does nothing but berate those who support it at the developer level. There are even those who suggest that Ralph "retire" because of burnout and lack of focus.

It's my personal belief that none of these "observations" are close to the truth. It's my belief that if everything we learn about Atari and its supporters (developers and users) were positive, then STReport would reflect that same aura of positive perception. But let's face it, things aren't all positive nor should anyone pretend that they are. To avoid the negative and just report the positive to appease the near-sighted is not fair to anyone, if you really get down and think about it. Yes, positive editorials, articles, reviews, and the like are desirable. But, if any of us are of the opinion that a topic, game, program, person, or company is not good for some reason or another, then shouldn't that be reported as such? Of course it should. Do you ignore it because it's not positive? Some might claim that to do so would be better. Personally, I'd love to read that Atari was the number one computer company in the world. I'd love to read that all programs were fast and bug-free. I'd love to hear that I could afford my Atari dream machine and peripherals. I'd love to hear that Anonymous Software's new game would keep me glued to the screen for hours on end. I'd love to learn that I had a dealer down the street with plenty of machines and software to look at or buy. I'd love to read that our developers were selling tons of software and hardware and were doing so well that they were back-ordered for weeks!

Folks, it just ain't so. So, what do we do when STReport publishes this not-so-positive picture? We take it out on STReport and its editors. Hey, why not? They/it are/is the source for all of this "bad" news; that not all is as rosy as we'd all love to believe it should be. And when you name names, or even imply them, the furor gets even worse! God forbid if any of us say anything bad about the company or those who support it! For shame that any of us have an opinion that doesn't agree with everything we see and hear! Put these doomsayers out to pasture; or worse, ostracize them in public and then shoot them! Get rid of the source behind this negativity and all of our problems will be resolved, right? Wrong. All that would change is you wouldn't read about anything negative anymore. You'd be left with just the propaganda. There are those who would rejoice at that possibility, I would not.

Perhaps, Ralph and STReport should not get so involved in the politics surrounding Atari. Unfortunately, that's easier said than done. Unfortunately, it's the true politicians who really enjoy politics; and it's those who aren't who usually enjoy taking the politicians to task.

Then again, there are those who enjoy dabbling in both!

So, where does that leave Ralph and STReport? Right smack in the middle, I'd daresay. Ralph is not a blind Atari follower, but if he had his druthers he'd want to be a follower. He is, however, a true advocate for the end user. His efforts to guarantee that STReport is out regularly is part of the proof. His willingness to talk with anyone about anything is well known.

His contributions to user group shows is highly commendable, and he supports them whenever he can, however he can. He maintains an online presence on all the major services. He maintains an open line of communication with his editors and writers to keep us/him informed of what's going on.

Am I claiming that everything that appears in STReport is the gospel truth and you should blindly and openly agree? No way. Not all rumors turn out to be true. Not all opinions are correct in everyone's view. But I can tell you that STReport does not make up stories, or report on things based on unsubstantiated rumor. It would be journalistic suicide to do so.

Before anyone takes me to task for this editorial, let me state for the record that I was not solicited for the above statements. Ralph has been accused several times of "using" myself and Lloyd Pulley of being his/STReport's mouthpiece while sitting back and keeping quiet. I am a contributing editor to this magazine, but I am an Atari user first. one who has an investment like everyone else in the various equipment and software we use. I am a proud Atari user who would like to be even prouder. I am quite active in the local Atari community, and try to maintain similar activity here and on Delphi and GEnie. If my two machines were simply toys or a passing hobby, I'd behave accordingly. I'd imagine that Ralph would do the same.

If you have any comments to make about this editorial, or STReport in general, I'd like to hear them. You can certainly take issue to anything that I have stated. I have always been open to hear opposing viewpoints, and STReport has always been amenable to publishing them. Your opinions are welcome, and you can keep them "off the record" if you should so desire. I can be reached on Delphi and GEnie, DPJ and D.JACOBSON2 respectively; or you can contact STReport directly on any of the online services.

STReport's online addresses are listed at the beginning of any issue. On Delphi, reach us in the ST Advantage area; and on GEnie, CAT 26, TOPIC 2 are the open forums.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that it's always the easy way out to take it out on the bearer of bad news. No one has to like the content of such news, but with the good also comes the bad. STReport has a lot to offer its readers, both good and bad. Be open-minded about it all is all I ask. Regardless of how you feel, don't "kill the messenger".

Until next time...

> Developer Miffed STR FOCUS
=====

Fast Tech's Jim Allen speaks out!

From GENie..

Category 15, Topic 10

Message 135 Wed Jul 17, 1991

J.ALLEN27 at 12:53 EDT

Letter to the Editor of AtariUser Magazine

Dear Mr. Editor,

I am writing to you to register my disappointment with the content of an article on page 11 of the July 1991 issue of AtariUser. The article in question made reference to the newest product released by my company FAST TECHNOLOGY, and reads as follows:

"A quasi-related mini-controversy has been raging over Jim Allen's Turbo20 accelerator. It seems that Jim has redesigned his Turbo16 and is driving "hand picked" 16Mhz 68000s at a higher clock rate to get still faster performance. A few critics forecast doom as the overdriven chips burn their way to oblivion, taking your computer with it. Jim claims quite to the contrary, his selection process determines the chips that can take the faster running without decay, and the ones that won't cut it aren't used. He stakes his reputation-a good one to date-on the reliability of the product. It's \$329. FAST TECHNOLOGY, P.O.Box 578, Andover MA 01810, 508-475-3810"

Since the issue hit the streets I have received numerous calls, letters, and Email from users, customers, and customers-to-be, many orders were cancelled.

The reason for cancellation was concern about the possible harm that the Turbo20 might do to their computers "as the overdriven chips BURN their way to oblivion".

In a market this small, with so few outlets of Atari related product information left, where the user community is still smarting after being "burned" by bad hardware designs, I find it APPALLING that a journalist would make such inflammatory statements, even in jest, or as a spoof.

The user community is not composed of electrical engineers and other professionals who would know better than to believe such statements. Most users are unfamiliar with these issues and look to the press for understanding and enlightenment.

No FACTS are cited, no "critics" are named or quoted. Yet the reader is left with the impression that people "in the know" have experience with these issues and have severe reservations about the product.

Since Fast Technology is the world's foremost authority on high speed 68000 design, with the only 20+Mhz research program ongoing, it's unlikely

anyone else in this market would be "in the know" enough to even comment on the subject.

The specifics of how Fast Technology qualifies parts for its products are trade secrets. Over 200 68000s have been tested and only ONE chip failed...a 12Mhz part that accidentally got into a shipment from our supplier.

During 1990, Motorola redesigned the 68000 chip...for purely manufacturing reasons, to increase yield and lower cost. Previous to this Fast Technology and other accelerator makers used a 12Mhz 68000 qualified by Motorola to operate at 16Mhz...a 33% overdrive. The new chips are real 16Mhz chips, and Fast Technology uses the same testing method to qualify these for operation at 20Mhz...a 25% overdrive. The real truth is, these chips are faster than even 20Mhz chips, but Motorola doesn't want to bother marketing the higher speed...can you say 68020, 68030, etc.

During manufacture, all 680X0/68882 chips are "speed graded". This involves running the chips at the highest speed, and testing the chips. Those that pass are rated at that speed, those that fail are tested at the next lower speed grade. So as an example, all the 68030s start out life being tested at 50Mhz, and are then sorted, even the ones that end up being 16Mhz chips...a 300+% overdrive. No damage is done, to the chips or the test fixture.

There is to my knowledge, no "controversy" about the Turbo20, raging or otherwise. There is no relationship "quasi" or otherwise between the Turbo20 accelerator and Gadgets by Small. There is no danger of the 68000 chip of the Turbo20 "burning up" and no danger of a failure causing harm to your computer.

I would appreciate your publishing this letter, to let all of our customers know that their computers aren't about to explode, at least not due to the Turbo20.

Respectfully yours,

James C. Allen, President

Fast Technology
P.O.Box 578
Andover, MA 01810
(508)-475-3810

Editor Note;

For those of you who may not be familiar with Jim Allen, Fast Tech or his accomplishments, the facts are plain and simple. Jim blazed the accelerator path in the ST platform when others were trying to produce a product that barely performed. Fast Tech introduced their T-16 and it was a stormer, a first class, reliable performer. This editor has three and this one I'm using now is going on two years in the same machine. The machine has performed magnificently. I might add that if anyone has any fears as to the reliability of Fast Tech, its products or Jim, you have absolutely nothing to be concerned about.

Its odd indeed, this business of a piece of hardware that may toast a computer... Thought I saw a whole topic about this very same thing, "a product that is not only bad but downright dangerous.", miraculously appear and then mysteriously disappear (the whole topic) from an online ser-

vice's ST area. While the one who uttered this nonsense is not even closely identified, (a professional courtesy), its plain and flat out total conjecture and flimsey opinion based on absolutely nothing but moon dust.

> TURBO BOARD BBS Ver. 2 STR InfoFile "How to get your own copy"
=====

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-----Cut here -----

Turbo Board Update Policy Information

Rev. Jun 28, 1991

~~~~~  
Turbo Board Version 2 comes complete with Manual, System Generator and all the files needed to get you up and running.

We have our Crossnet TECH SUPPORT Conference and our Support BBS at 416-274-1225 for product support, and you may call up to download free updates, for a given revision (ie 1.x versions, 2.x versions)

All Customers may join our Tech Support conferences to support their given software versions. (ie Version 2 Support conference)

Mail-in Updates

~~~~~  
If you choose to mail in your Turbo Disk for an update, please enclose \$10 for handling (certified cheque or money order). We will update your Turbo disk with the latest update for a given version (ie V1, or V2).

Our Policy on Software Piracy

~~~~~  
We reserve the right NOT to support any Turbo Board Owner found pirating our software. If we have obtained proof that a person has done so, we will no longer support them. Turbo Board is sold on a SITE basis, meaning that you may run the software on more than one machine, ONLY if the machines are physically located at the same site (Same Street Address).

If not, you are running your software in violation of our Piracy Policy, and we reserve the right to discontinue product support and report such conduct to the appropriate federal authorities.

John Miller , ///Turbo Board Support

## Turbo Board ST Version 2

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Turbo Board ST Version 2 is a total rewrite of our original BBS program. Over a year's work has gone into the total rewrite of Version 1, and Bill Miller has really outdone himself this time! We think we have a very good BBS program indeed! Version 2 IS Shipping!!

The ///Turbo Board Support bbs is running at bps rates from 1200-14400 if you would like to give us a call, the number is 416-274-1225.

Our F-net number is node 18, if you are calling from an ST bbs in the Fnet.

Turbo Board Version 2 is only available through Bitblit Systems.

### - Our Address:

Bitblit Systems  
1580 Liveoak Dr.  
Mississauga, Ont.  
Canada L5E 2X6

## Turbo Board Version 2's NEW Features

---

- Expanded User privileges and Bitmaps for Passwords
- KByte/File Ratio System
- Batch uploading & User File Description Editing
- Ymodem-g uploads for HST users
- BBS Handles/Real Name system
- Full User File Editor
- Masked Sysop commands ( For Co-sysops)
- Many NEW Sysop Functions, including new File Editor and Password Editor
- Execute files from Main menu commands
- Sysop definable Prompts, and menus
- Main Menu commands and functions fully programmable (also Submenus)
- Many New Copy and Save Functions for Fmail, and other files
- Quick help edit prompt in message editor
- Modular BBS, (Main Module only uses about 80K of memory) for greater free memory when running Binkley (Fido Mailer)
- NEW Database, you can use archives, and users can easily upload new database entries, entries have access levels
- BBS handles line answering instead of modem
- NEW SIG system for grouping message bases, fully configurable by Sysop
- Quick Chat and DOS keys from local console
- NEW Turbo System Generator with expanded features
- UPDATE program for Turbo V1 and Forem ST Sysops to convert to V2
- New Version 2 Manual (addendum for Version 1 Turbo Owners)

-And many other new small features not listed here that are improvements

over our Version 1.0

-Version 2.0 is now running on our support bbs, and is available NOW.

Pricing:

~~~~~  
\$89.95 US - USA and International List price
\$69.95 US - Special price for FOREM ST V2 and EXPRESS ST SYSOPS
(With proof of ownership - manual cover or valid Fnet node)
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(Canadian residents may send CDN dollars instead of US)

We have noticed that the people writing the new versions of Forem ST have copied many of our newer features that we had in version 1.0 of our BBS program. Many of the sysops running Forem ST, look at Turbo Board and ask the Forem guys to include our new features.

We only say, you can go with the leader, or you can stay with the followers. Why wait for new features, when you can have them now, as it will take FOREM a LONG time to catch up to us this time around.

Turbo Board Version 2 is the MOST ADVANCED AND POWERFUL BBS program available for the Atari ST.

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